

**Maricopa County Planning and Development Department
State Route 74 Scenic Corridor Guidelines
February 15, 2006
Summary of 2nd Public Meeting**

Location: Morristown Elementary School

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

No. of Attendees: Approximately 25 people

Staff:

Matt Holm (Principal Planner)	Maricopa County Planning & Development
Andy Piper (Planner-Project Mgr.)	Maricopa County Planning & Development
Jeff Clawson (Asst. Planner)	Maricopa County Planning & Development

1. Open House

During the first 15 minutes of the meeting, attendees signed in, picked up surveys and copies of the 1st draft of the scenic corridor guidelines, and viewed seven posters, which included the study boundaries, land ownership, approved and pending area developments, the purpose of scenic corridors, study limitations, and aerial photographs.

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Matt opened the meeting by thanking those in attendance for coming to the meeting and introduced staff. He also briefly explained “why we are here,” – to gather information, comments, issues, and concerns about the 1st draft of the State Route 74 Scenic Corridor Guidelines, which had previously been mailed out to all property owners within the scenic corridor boundaries, as well as to identified stakeholders. He also pointed out that copies of the 1st draft were available at the meeting for those who did not receive one in the mail. He stressed the importance of this meeting as a means to gain insight into issues that will help formulate the finalized policies and design guidelines for the scenic corridor.

3. Presentation

Andy Piper, Project Manager, presented a few PowerPoint slides outlining the State Route 74 Scenic Corridor Guidelines.

First, he provided a few quick facts, including the study boundaries, which are ¼ mile on each side of the centerline of State Route 74 for approx. 24 miles from Lake Pleasant Rd. on the east, to US 60 (Grand Ave.) on the west. He also pointed out that although the scenic corridor is located partially in the City of Peoria, who was invited to

participate in the study, the guidelines would only apply to unincorporated areas of Maricopa County. Additionally, the design guidelines would only apply to new residential subdivisions, commercial and industrial development, and not to existing development or future lot split properties. He also stated that the proposed guidelines were a reflection of comments, ideas, and recommendations from area residents and stakeholders, which is why we are here tonight – to get additional feedback and input from local community members and stakeholders.

Next, he presented a general overview of the purpose for the scenic corridor. The reason for initiating the study comes from the Maricopa County Transportation System Plan (TSP), which is part of *Eye to the Future 2020*, Maricopa County's Comprehensive Plan. The plan identifies State Route 74 with a scenic and recreational overlay, and includes policies to preserve and update scenic corridors. The scenic corridor guidelines recognize the area's unique qualities and attempts to preserve the character of the area ahead of anticipated future growth. Through design guidelines, it recommends development principles consistent with the corridor's characteristics. However, he also pointed out that the guidelines are policies, not regulations, and so are somewhat limited in authority. For example, they will "encourage" and "recommend" but not mandate what future developers "shall" do.

Andy then pointed out some of the other limitations of scenic corridor guidelines. They do not prevent the sale or transfer of land, or prevent the development of land. He reiterated that they do not apply to existing development or to future residential development outside of recorded subdivisions. The guidelines also do not designate historic land or buildings, and do not impact improvements to the road itself. He also made it clear that the scenic corridor guidelines do not identify future land uses, which is instead part of the Area Plan.

Next, he outlined the implications for future development. In the past, similar scenic corridors in Maricopa County have neither deterred nor promoted growth in an area. He again reiterated that the guidelines would only affect new development, and does not restrict the future land uses that might be approved. Rather, it is intended to enhance the quality of development that does occur in the future in order to integrate it into the surrounding environment and preserve the area's unique character.

Lastly, Andy showed a list of some of the considerations that went into determining the design guidelines, including landscaping, vegetation, natural habitats, topography, open space buffers, character and identity, development styles, site grading, building height, lighting, signs, fences and walls, screening, building colors, traffic circulation, and trail connectivity. He used a series of sketches to show examples of development "with" and "without" a scenic corridor to illustrate many of the concepts covered by the guidelines.

In conclusion, Matt outlined the process for approval of the guidelines. After any additional comments or ideas are incorporated into the final draft, it will be mailed out to all property owners and stakeholders, along with information about the date, time and location for the Planning and Zoning Commission hearing. After the Commission's

recommendation, it will go before the Board of Supervisors approximately one month later for resolution and adoption.

4. Issue Identification and Question & Answer Session

Prior to closing the meeting, those in attendance were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments. In general, the following questions and comments were made:

- ✓ Will these guidelines be consistent with other plans for the road (ADOT, Peoria)?
- ✓ Will this affect the use of my property?
- ✓ What is the ultimate width of the road? Won't future expansion of the right-of-way reduce the size of the scenic corridor?
- ✓ This really only affects the physical design of future development, right?
- ✓ What is the effect of having so much state land in the area?
- ✓ The lighting restrictions will hopefully help reduce nighttime light pollution and sign restrictions will be important
- ✓ Some fencing is necessary for keeping of animals
- ✓ General recognition and acceptance of growth in the area, but support for efforts to preserve the natural environment
- ✓ Traffic, especially large trucks, is making the road dangerous for pedestrians, equestrians and off-highway vehicle users
- ✓ So, this is just a "wish list" for developers to follow with no real "teeth"
- ✓ Is the public hearing going to be in downtown Phoenix? Can the hearing be in Morristown instead?

The general response to these questions and comments was to reiterate that these guidelines will not impact the physical improvements to the road itself, even though it will be consistent with other plans for the road. For instance, future right-of-way expansion is not covered by these guidelines, but the required setbacks for the particular zoning district would be measured from the ultimate width, as is normally the case. However, future developers would be advised to provide additional open space buffers, as recommended by these guidelines, or provide justification for not doing so. It was also pointed out that there is an existing State Route 74 scenic corridor overlay as part of the zoning ordinance, but that this update would be a separate, stand alone document. Staff again emphasized that the guidelines will only apply to new development, not existing properties, and will not impact allowable uses along the road. So, for instance, fencing on currently developed land and future lot splits will not be affected. There was also a brief discussion about the potential for more development eventually occurring on State lands in the area. Comments recognizing the limited nature of the guidelines and supporting the purpose of the guidelines were affirmed by staff. Matt stated that he would suggest a separate hearing in Morristown, but that it was not likely, because there would be many other cases being presented to the Commission at the hearing.

In closing the meeting, Matt Holm thanked those in attendance for coming to the meeting, and emphasized the importance of returning the surveys. They were also directed to the County's website for links to the draft and as a way to provide feedback. Those on the contact list will be notified when the final draft is complete and given the date, time, and location of the Planning and Zoning Commission hearing. Matt again thanked all those who attended for their input. The meeting was then adjourned.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this project, or would like to provide additional ideas, comments, or recommendations, please contact Andy Piper, Planner, at the following:

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If you would like a copy of the first draft and a survey mailed to you, please contact us and one will be sent to you. Remember, the scenic corridor guidelines represent a vision for your community, so please let us hear from you!